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ABSTRACT

The literary genre explored in this study is The Fantastic Tale for Children, which combines magic and reality. Two examples of the "pure" fantastic tale are "The Return of the Twelves" by Pauline Clarke and "Tom's Midnight Garden" by Philippa Pearce. The motifs of the fantastic tale are methods which connect the world of the principal characters with a mythical or remote world, such as the living toy figures, the strange children, the modern witches, the supernatural animal figures, minature people, the combat between good and evil, journeys through space and time, and the door. The consequences of genre research for literary criticism of the fantastic tale are that with this literature, the critic must judge how independently or unoriginally the motifs are treated, and he must determine if motifs of nonsense literature accord with the motifs of the fantastic tale. The educational purposes of the fantastic tale are to stimulate feeling and imagination; to give moral lessons and encourage philosophical discussions; and to satisfy the needs of children. Psychological problems related to the child's interest in the magic apparatus and their capacity for understanding it and for understanding the various ideas in the fantastic tale are discussed. A list of the 32 fantastic tales discussed is given as are references. (For related document, see ED 022 750.) (DB)

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Göte Klingberg

THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

A Genre Study from the Viewpoints of Literary and Educational Research

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A Genre Study
from the Viewpoints of Literary and Educational Research

This is the study of a comparatively new genre concept of children´s literature, and is also an attempt to provide a concrete example of a field of research which co-ordinates several branches of learning. The points examined, therefore, include not only the definition of the genre, its characteristic motifs and the consequences of genre research for literary criticism, but also the educational purpose of the genre and its child-psychological problems.

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GENRE AS A WORKING CONCEPT IN RESEARCH ON LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

Authors write as it suits them and they may create masterpieces which are hard to fit into genre classifications. Genres are, however, abstractions which we, nevertheless, make since they are material for the description and discussion of literature.

How research on literature for children may use the genre concept is illustrated by the following examples:

1. The description of the enormous mass of literature for children must be ordered in some fashion. A division into genres seems to be the most practicable method. So, a general survey of children's literature is facilitated by studying each genre separately, at the same time taking into consideration the different domains of language.

2. There should be some investigation of the spread of children's literature from country to country. Its practical purpose would be to throw light upon the difficulties and the possibilities of international understanding through this literature. It is not only a question of the spreading of literature on the whole. The spreading of literary types is equally important. Some countries may have special importance with regard to certain literary categories. Well-defined genres aid such investigations.

3. The working concept genre facilitates the co-ordination of different aspects in research on literature for children. So far as a certain educational aim is included in the genre definition, as is sometimes the case, genre research means a co-ordination of the method of educational history and the comparative literary method. Studies involving child-psychological methods of children's reading interests and understanding of literature and those applying sociological methods of reading habits are often linked to genre classifications. One either simply asks what types of books children prefer, or one collects spontaneous answers and divides them according to categories. Such divisions made by child psychologists or by sociologists easily become too indistinct to have any real value. Clear genre concepts are needed here. If such concepts are found in genre research, the necessary co-ordination between the

methods of literary research and history of education on the one side and the psychological and sociological methods on the other is established.

4. A fundamental question for literary criticism is how homogeneous a work of art is. When a motif belonging to one genre is used in another or when two genres are mixed, then, as a rule, the artistic unity is disturbed. The independent treatment of a motif also belongs to literary quality. Knowledge of the genres and motifs of children´s literature must facilitate such aesthetic criticism.

The word genre itself is somewhat diffuse. It may refer to the divisions into epic, lyric and drama. It may, however, also stand for an unlimited number of literary categories, either in formal respect (for instance, the letter-novel) or with regard to the content (the ghost-story, for example). Wellek and Warren (1966, 231) contend that the criterions of a genre are formal as well as defined by the content. If the term formal genre is used with reference to formal categories, the word genre (alone) may be used in the wider sense of Wellek and Warren.

A genre in children´s literature is characterized by

a) a number of motifs particularly characteristic of the genre,

b) (sometimes) a special literary outer form,

c) an aesthetic intent,

d) (often) a specific educational aim.

Comment:

a) There is a connection between genre and motif. The motifs are literary elements that are combined into genres. A motif should be defined as a pattern of action and situation which can be filled with different matter (the concrete content, tied to individual persons, places and points of time). The motifs will reappear with varying matter in different authors and in works that are remote in time. On the other hand, the matter may contain several motifs.

It is to be noted, however, that the same motif may appear in different genres. As will be seen later in this treatise the motif of "the flying carpet" belongs to the chimerical tale (the "fairy-tale", see below) and to the fantastic tale as well. The motif of "the door" belongs to the fantastic tale but occurs in nonsense literature, too.

b) The connection between literary form and genre is exemplified by the sub-group of the instructive and moral adventure story which I have

called the religious-romantic adventure story (Klingberg 1964). (Examples of the type are the books of Christoph von Schmid.) Here, the motifs which are characteristic of the genre and the particular, marked evangelizing purpose are always coupled with a choice of words that give a romantic description of natural scenery and an ardent religious tone. Another example is that the chimerical tale is characterized by rectilinear disposition and a frequent use of the triad.

A distinction between poetic and prose genres, on the other hand, is hard to maintain. Thus, stories about children (moral and nonmoral) may be written in prose as well as in verse.

c) The example of Wellek and Warren (1966, 233) of an aesthetic intent is that the Gothic novel aims to give the reader a special form of "pleasurable horror and thrill". A similar intent obviously belongs to several genres in children´s literature (it is often said that children want this literature to be exciting).

d) The question of the educational aim is complicated. Literature published for children may, as a rule, be said to have an educational purpose (i.e. to instruct, to stimulate the imagination, to satisfy a child´s need). Such intentions are, however, not necessarily tied to special genres. Books that have a common educational aim may belong to separate genres. On the other hand, works of the same genre may have different educational aims.

Sometimes, however, the educational intention is a characteristic of a certain genre. The religious-romantic adventure story mentioned above always wishes to give religious instruction. The best example is perhaps the necessity of distinguishing between the moral chimerical tale and the chimerical tale without instructional intent.

Since genres and motifs are abstractions the method of genre and motif research is inductive. Wellek and Warren may here be quoted (1966, 260-262): "The dilemma of genre history is the dilemma of all history: i.e. in order to discover the scheme of reference (in this case, the genre) we must study the history; but we cannot study the history without having in mind some scheme of selection. Our logical circle is, however, not insurmountable in practice ... The historian must intuitively, though provisionally, grasp what is essential to the genre which is his concern, and then go to the origins of the genre, to verify

or correct his hypothesis. Though the genre will appear in the history exemplified in the individual works, it will not be described by all traits of these individual works: we must conceive of genre as a 'regulative' concept, some underlying pattern, a convention which is real."

Provisional conceptions of motifs and genres are developed through extensive reading. These conceptions serve as working hypotheses and are tested through further reading. As Wellek and Warren emphasize it is essential to discover the historical origin of the genre.

Genre research involves the following:

a) that each genre is given a name which can be used in as many languages as possible,
b) that the genre is given a definition,
c) that boundaries are laid down between the genre and other seemingly adjacent genres,
d) that the genre is analysed with reference to its characteristic motifs,
e) that a historical origin is ascribed to the genre,
f) that its further history is examined with simultaneous regard to different domains of language,
g) that its special literary outer form, if any, is described,
h) that its aesthetic purpose is made clear,
i) that the use in literary criticism of the knowledge about the genre and its motifs is pointed out,
j) that the educational intention (or educational intentions) of the genre is studied,
k) that the relative importance of the genre during different times is investigated,
l) that the relative importance of the genre in different countries is examined,
m) that the geographical spreading of the genre is mapped,
n) that the preference of children for the genre is studied,
o) that the capacity of children for understanding the genre is investigated,
p) that the extent to which the genre is read by children is studied.

The following chapters dealing with the fantastic tale for children have been produced because this genre concept is comparatively new and not sufficiently explored. They may also be regarded as an attempt to provide a concrete example of a research field in which several branches of learning are co-ordinated. Several of the tasks of genre research mentioned above have been undertaken.

THE DEFINITION OF THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

The fantastic tale was first recognized as a genre of children´s literature rather recently. Its distinctive feature is said to be that wonders (magic) and reality are found side by side. Anna Krüger says that she had the idea in 1952 and gave the definition of the genre in 1954, in the 2nd edition of her "Das Buch: Gefährte eurer Kinder". She speaks here about "fantastic adventure stories". This book of 1954 is the starting point for Ruth Koch (1959), who uses the term "fantastic tales". A new treatise on the "fantastic book" was presented by Krüger (1960).

Now and again we find this new genre concept in recent theoretical literature. Bettina Hürlimann (1963, 180, 182) speaks of the "category of the fantastic, unreal children´s book" and discusses some works under the heading "fantastic literature of recent years". Richard Bamberger (1965, 142-150) includes, with reference to Krüger, "the fantastic story" in his survey of the genres of children´s literature. Margarete Dierks has in her tribute to the 3rd edition of Irene Dyhrenfurth´s history of the German book for young people distinguished between "fantastic stories" and "Kunstmärchen" (Dyhrenfurth 1967, 230-235). In England Margery Fisher (1965, 81, 110, 132) uses expressions such as "fairy adventure stories" (in describing the Narnian books of C.S. Lewis) and "magic adventure stories" (e.g. in the case of Masefield´s "The Midnight Folk"), and says that "fantasy" would be an appropriate word to characterize stories "which bring magic and the irrational into our own world".

The scope of the concept varies in different treatises, however. The word "fantastic" may mean several things. It can be said that an inclination towards the fantastic is a characteristic of modern children´s literature (side by side with an equally important inclination towards realism or naturalism). This has been of importance for several genres. As the genres are devised as abstractions in order to simplify a general view, it is advisable, however, not to construct categories which are too extensive.

Krüger´s definition may be the starting point. That wonders (magic) and reality are found side by side is regarded as the conclusive characteristic. This means that two different worlds form a unity in the

fantastic tale.

The term "fantastic tale" is tied to the "Märchen" of E.T.A. Hoffmann; "contes fantastiques" being the title used in the French translations. The definition used by the literary historians in order to distinguish the "Kunstmärchen" of Hoffmann from the other tales of the German Romantics, can also be applied to the fantastic tale for children. In his dissertation on the "Kunstmärchen" of Hoffmann, Paul-Wolfgang Wührl (1963, 61-62) writes that in these "Märchen" "neither the reality of experience nor the ´world of fantasy´ appear as ´the world´. Both are rather components of a whole, of a ´poetic reality´, their boundaries merging .... The reality of experience and the realm of magic are fused. Within that field of tension, which encompasses both sectors, the ´Märchen´-worlds are formed, the ´poetic realities´of the individual stories. Thence their uniqueness which differentiates them clearly from other ´Märchen´ literature."

Among the fantastic tales of Hoffmann two are written especially for children. In "Nussknacker und Mausekönig" we meet an ordinary middle-class family during their Christmas celebrations and a friend of the family who seems quite commonplace. The toys in this ordinary world, however, become alive, and the friend turns out to have a mysterious background: the nut-cracker is his nephew laid under a magic spell. Another ordinary family is described in "Das fremde Kind". But the children´s private tutor is transformed under the very eyes of the parents into a fly, and the father tries to kill him with a fly-swat. These two stories are typical examples of the fantastic tales of Hoffmann; common reality and a magic world are found side by side and are nevertheless in complete union.

If the word "fantastic" is to be made use of at all in research on children´s literature, it seems appropriate to regard the two children´s stories by Hoffmann as the first of the genre – the fantastic tale for children – and to take over the definition of the "Kunstmärchen" of Hoffmann as the definition of this genre. I have already made this suggestion (Klingberg 1967, 13). About the same time Dierks referred to the two tales of Hoffmann (Dyhrenfurth 1967, 230). Krüger also supports this idea (letter to the author 10.10.1967). It thus seems possible to gain agreement in this respect.

The definition excludes all children´s literature, where realism and wonders are not found side by side and in union. The distinction between fantastic tale and chimerical tale[1], for instance,is made in this way.

This distinction could otherwise be a problem, as the chimerical tale is characterized by elements that are also found in the fantastic tales: supernatural helpers, magic means, witches, etc. It can be observed that Fisher places books such as Masefield´s "The Midnight Folk", Norton´s "Bed-Knob and Broomstick" and "The Borrowers", and Sleigh´s "Carbonel" (books that are regarded here as fantastic tales) in a book list under the heading "The modern fairy-tale" (Fisher 1965, 113-115).

The distinction between the fantastic tale and the chimerical tale has already been made by Krüger and Koch: in "das Märchen" all belongs to the wonderland. Hürlimann (1963, 174) says that "Peter Pan" does not belong to "Märchen", since the story takes places in an existing world. Fisher (1965, 132) distinguishes between "fantasy", i.e. stories "which bring magic and the irrational into our own world", and "fairy-tales" which are set in "an enchanted country".

The chimerical tale and the fantastic tale are also kept apart by different literary structures, as Bamberger has pointed out (1965, 142): the "fantastic story" is said to be "´Märchen´-like fiction which does not follow the strict laws of form of the old ´Volksmärchen´ or ´Kunstmärchen´". I shall only make a practical distinction here: the chimerical tale occurs at some unspecified place and time, whereas the reality of the fantastic tale is "here and now", often the world of some ordinary children in the author´s own time.

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[1] The German genre term "Märchen" as well as the Swedish "saga" may mean different things, e.g. magic tale ("Wundermärchen") and droll ("Schwank"). It is unsatisfactory, moreover, that these words are hard to translate into other languages. The French literary tale of the 17th and 18th centuries was called "conte des fées", i.e. a tale of the fairies. Such a term cannot contribute to a clear genre definition, nor can the English equivalent – "fairy-tale", In Danish one speaks of "eventyr",which, however, is the same word as adventure, and therefore impossible as an international term. We thus need a new term. I have tried to introduce "chimerical tale" ("Schimäreerzählung", "conte chimérique"), in line with the Swedish folklorist von Sydow (1934) who tried to distinguish between five types of "Märchen" and gave one of these types the name "Schimäremärchen". I have, however, exchanged "Märchen" for "Erzählung" ("tale").

The fantastic tale should also be distinguished from tales of mythical worlds, where only one world is described. In books such as de la Mare´s "The Three Mulla-Mulgars" ("The Three Royal Monkeys"), Tolkien´s "The Hobbit", and Jansson´s books of the valley of the Mumins (Moomins), we only meet the mythical world and nothing of ordinary reality. These books are therefore to be placed in a separate genre. (On the other hand, when the mythical world is only one of two worlds, as in the Narnian books of C.S. Lewis, we are in the sphere of the fantastic tale.)

Also outside the fantastic tale are stories about ordinary children who only live in the ordinary world. One cannot, as Dierks (Dyhrenfurth 1967, 231), regard Lindgren´s "Mästerdetektiven Blomkvist" as a fantastic tale. In this book there is no fantastic element. The problem is, however, that some of the books about ordinary children, especially those about lonely children, give child-psychological accounts of imaginary companions. Now the strange children is a motif in the fantastic tale (see below). These strange children are, however, no imaginary companions. They are real persons from an unknown world, while the imaginary companions belong to the experience of the child. In Peterson´s "Liselott och garaffen" (Liselott and the Garaffe) the "Garaffe" is real for Liselott, but in the same way that children experience their imaginary companions as real. At the same time Liselott is aware of the fact that the "Garaffe" is an imaginary companion. In "A Dog So Small" Pearce tells the story of a boy who longs for a dog but only gets a picture of a dog. He experiences the dog as real, particularly with closed eyes. What is described here is the eidetic phenomenon of child psychology. Stories about children and their imaginary companions are enacted only in one world and are thus not fantastic tales.

On the other hand, what is to be placed in a genre must be decided on a formal basis. If one begins to discuss, whether strange children, mythical worlds and so on, are "internal" or "external", one ends in arbitrary distinctions.

A distinction must also be made between fantastic tale and nonsense literature. In her analysis of Lear and Dodgson, Elizabeth Sewell (1952) considers that this literature is logical, although the logic is peculiar. On the other hand, Hürlimann (1963, 169) speaks about a surrealistic logic that is no true logic. The distinction between nonsense literature

and other genres of children´s literature must, in reason, have its starting point in the absurdity of nonsense literature. If there is some form of logic, it is not ordinary logic. "Unsinn" is the German word used by Alfred Liede (1963, 159), when he regards "nonsense poetry" as the English parallel of German "Unsinnspoesie". The distinction between fantastic tale and nonsense literature suggested here is thus that the fantastic tale is wholly logical, while in nonsense literature there is no, at least no ordinary, logic at all.

It has to be acknowledged that nonsense traits are often found in what must be regarded as true fantastic tales. There are already such traits in the account of the sausage banquet in Hoffmann´s "Nussknacker und Mausekönig" (in the inserted "Märchen von der harten Nuss"). A spread of nonsense traits to other literary categories is, however, very characteristic of much children´s literature. We find parodic variants of "folktales" with nonsense traits; even the detective novel has been travestied in this way. That we may find nonsense traits in the fantastic tales must not prevent the demarcation of a boundary between nonsense literature and the fantastic tale. It may, indeed, at times be doubtful in which genre a certain book is to be placed. However, the task of research on literature for children is not necessarily to place every book in a certain genre. The genres are abstractions, but valuable as such.

The demarcation of a boundary between fantastic tale and nonsense literature causes several books that in earlier theoretical discussion were placed among the fantastic tales to be excluded from this group.

Dodgson´s "Alice´s Adventures in Wonderland" is called "the second classical example of a fantastic story" by Bamberger (1965, 143), and Dierks mentions the book among foreign prototypes of the fantastic tale in Germany (Dyhrenfurth 1967, 230). "Alice" is, however, a type specimen of nonsense literature. There is no mixture of everyday life and fantastic elements either; Alice´s experiences are described as a dream.

Other books that have been counted as fantastic tales are also preferably to be regarded as nonsense literature. An example is Travers´s books about Mary Poppins. Even Krüger (1960, 351), who includes these books among the fantastic stories, says that Travers moves into the style of nonsense literature. In Lillegg´s "Feuerfreund" there is only one world: the cat speaks from the beginning, and nobody is surprised. Of a similar kind is Krüss´s "Der Leuchtturm auf den Hummerklippen".

One is immediately introduced to a single world, where the Poltergeist and the Waterman are members. Moreover, Hürlimann (1963, 184) says that Krüss made "the concept of English nonsense" popular in Germany. The adventures in Ende´s "Jim Knopf und Lukas der Lokomotivführer" are not real, nor is the starting point of the journey, the country with four inhabitants and a king who has the number Quarter-to-Twelve.

Rather more difficult is Kästner´s "Der 35. Mai". Here one can speak of two worlds, what is stressed through the occurrence of a "door" to the other world (a typical motif of the fantastic tale, see below). Further, Kästner criticizes society and he dreams of a Utopian land, whereas nonsense literature usually has no instructive aim. However, the absurdities are so frequent in this book that on the whole it is a nonsense book. The world turned upside-down (mundus inversus), a typical motif of nonsense literature, occurs as a chapter-heading.

On the other hand C.S. Lewis´s "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" must be seen as a fantastic tale, although there are nonsense traits. (On the bookshelf of the Faun are "Men, Monks and Gamekeepers; a Study in Popular Legend" and "Is Man a Myth?". This is mundus inversus. The beavers have furniture and a sewing machine, tea, sugar and matches.) These parts are, however, so isolated that they cannot change the general impression.

Let us finally consider <u>two examples of the "pure" fantastic tale.</u>

Pauline Clarke´s "The Twelve and the Genii" (American: "The Return of the Twelves") tells the story of three children, who, as well as their family and the whole neighbourhood, are very commonplace and real. The story would be a family story, if the forgotten wooden soldiers of the Brontë children, discovered by the younger brother, had not appeared as alive (and if some animals, moreover, had not spoken with these soldiers). In a sense the life of the wooden soldiers is a creation of the imagination, but not the imagination of the heroes but of the Brontë children. The explanation, if one can speak of such a thing, is that the creative power of the genius can inspire life. The Brontë children had named the soldiers and devised adventures for them. All this became real for the toys. In the tale the soldiers really are alive; they are seen by the adults as well as by the children. They are a clear fantastic element, yet part of everyday life. There are no nonsense traits. Nor does the story resemble the chimerical tale: the story takes

place in Yorkshire, the time is the present.

A. Philippa Pearce´s "Tom´s Midnight Garden" is about a boy staying with his relatives. At night he goes out into the garden, but the garden is as it was long ago. To the people who live in these bygone days he becomes a phantom from the future. Here, too, there is a possible "explanation". Tom´s experiences may arise out of the dreams of the old lady. The question, however, remains, how her dreams can be real in Tom´s experiences. A strange world is connected with a real. Every nonsense trait is missing. As in Clarke´s book the locality is stated, and the time is the present.

THE MOTIFS OF THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

The motifs of the fantastic tale for children tell of a strange world which is connected with a real one, or about a method which renders the union between the two worlds possible.

The strange world can be a magic world in the middle of the real world. Motifs that give evidence of such a magic world are the living toys, the strange children, the modern witches and the supernatural animal figures. The strange world can, moreover, be a mythical world wholly outside the real one. The fantastic element is that persons in the mythical or in the real world can be brought to the other or become aware of it. The mythical worlds are fully structured, they are complete worlds beside ours. Sometimes the motif of the combat between good and evil is encountered. This combat is often fought in the mythical world, since it is a mythological combat. It concerns our world too, however, and thereby connects the two worlds. Finally, the strange world can be a wholly real world, which, nevertheless, is remote in space and time. The fantastic element is the transfer to this world. Methods which connect the world of the principal characters with a mythical or a remote world are the magic journeys through space or (and) time. A special motif is the "door", which renders such journeys possible.

The living toy figures

In his work for adults E.T.A Hoffmann showed an interest in automatons, and the living toy figures in his tales for children are something of this kind. The nut-cracker and the toys in the cabinet ("Nussknacker und Mausekönig", 1816) become alive. In "Das fremde Kind" (1817), the toys given by the uncle attack the children. H.C. Andersen´s "Den lille Idas Blomster" (Little Ida´s Flowers) (1835), based on "Nussknacker und Mausekönig", may have influenced many later authors. It is not in her dream but when awake that Ida sees the flowers and the toys dancing. In John Masefield´s "The Midnight Folk" (1927) living toys are found, too. The work by Pauline Clarke, "The Twelve and the Genii" (1962) has already been mentioned. A detail by Clarke reminiscent of Hoffmann is that the wooden soldiers are sometimes alive, sometimes just wood.

Clarke recounts the same experience that Marie has in "Nussknacker and Mausekönig": suddenly she notices that the nut-cracker becomes warm in her hand and begins to move.

In modern literature for younger children, living dolls, cars, planes, etc. are commonplace. All these stories hardly belong, however, to the fantastic tale, and especially not when no combination of two worlds makes a fantastic impression. A doubtful case is "Floating Island" (1930) by Anne Parrish, a book that tells of dolls which behave as human beings. A fantastic element (a trace of two worlds) exists but is casual. When the doll family is saved through a lighted fire which is discovered by real sailors, the sailors search for shipwrecked people but only find a doll´s house with dolls.

The strange children

The motif of the strange children is encountered in the title of Hoffmann´s "Das fremde Kind". The children of the story play in the forest with the strange child, the son of the fairy queen. One could perhaps interpret this figure as an imaginary companion. But since the children´s tutor is a gnome-prince, the strange child may really be the son of the fairy queen.

A modern example of a "pure" tale about a strange child is "The Summer Birds" (1962) by Penelope Farmer. Here, a boy visits a school class one summer and teaches the children to fly. He has a hidden purpose. The boy is in fact a bird, disguised as a boy. He wants to turn the children into birds, take them to his island and thus guarantee the continued existence of his species.

The four chapters in Katherine Allfrey´s "Dimitri" (1966) that form a fantastic tale (in the middle of an otherwise realistic story about children) bear a striking resemblance to Hoffmann´s tale about the strange child. Dimitri meets another boy in the open, he plays with him and is happy. The strange child, however, is a phantom from prehistoric Greece.

Peter Pan and Pippi Longstocking have very little of mythology. In "Peter Pan and Wendy" (1911) James Matthew Barrie tells the story of some fairly realistic children (the book displays, however, many elements of nonsense and parody). Peter Pan shows himself to these children. He is a child who does not want to grow up, and is living with the fairies.

In spite of his childish appearance he is stronger than an ordinary child. Peter teaches the children to fly and brings them to his island Never-land. Astrid Lindgren´s Pippi (for the first time in "Pippi Långstrump", 1945) is fantastic to a lesser extent; in certain respects she is an ordinary child. She has, however, a kinship with Peter Pan in that she does not want to grow up and she is enormously strong. Hence, she must surely be classed among the strange children.

It would seem possible in this connection also to think about the boys in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry´s "Le petit prince" (1945) and in Maurice Druon´s "Tistou les pouces verts" (1957). These books tell of children who come to mankind from other worlds. In them, there is, however, not the same mixture of wonderland and everyday life as in the fantastic tales. I am not sure which genre to class them as, perhaps they may be regarded as chimerical tales or as fables.

The modern witches

The witch (female or male) is a frequent figure in the chimerical tale. Like all the other figures in the chimerical tale she (or he). belongs to the world of wonders, however. As distinct from these witches of the chimerical tale, the modern witches of the fantastic tale appear in day-to-day life. Thereby they express the connection between the two worlds. A male witch is the tutor in Hoffmann´s "Das fremde Kind". He is really a gnome and is responsible for the death of the father. A very similar motif is found in Masefield´s "The Midnight Folk", where the boy´s antagonists form a witches´ coven and the leader is disguised as the boy´s governess.

"The White Witch", Jadis, in the books about Narnia, resides for the most part in the different mythical worlds that are described by Lewis. Thus she does not,properly speaking, represent the connection between the world of magic and the world of reality. In "The Magician´s Nephew" (1955), however, she pays a short visit to our world when she arrives in London.

The three witches referred to are representatives of the forces of darkness. In this way the witches of popular belief are evil beings. On the other hand, belief in the power and wickedness of the witches has decreased, and so they may be seen in a more varied way. Uncle Andrew in Lewis´s "The Magician´s Nephew" is surely not a good man, but his conduct is caused by conceit and ignorance. The witch in

"Carbonel" (1955) by Barbara Sleigh is a real witch, but when her spell-book is burned she becomes quite respectable.

Miss Price in Mary Norton´s "Bed-Knob and Broomstick (1945-47, 1957) is rather nice. She is quite an ordinary woman but has studied magic. Moreover, there is something nonsenselike that weakens the witch character: she has bought the poisoned dragon´s liver ready-made since a liver of this kind is required for the equipment, and she seems to be happily surprised when her conjuring tricks succeed.

The supernatural animal figures

In several fantastic tales remarkable animal figures are supernatural helpers which can transfer someone from one world to another. To a certain extent one can speak of an element from the chimerical tale, where animals appear as supernatural helpers (one thinks, for instance, of Puss-in-Boots).

An early example is the cuckoo in Mary Louisa Molesworth´s "The Cuckoo Clock" (1877). A girl, Griselda, lives with her aunts in a wholly real environment. In the house there is a cuckoo-clock. This clock is an heirloom, and the cuckoo is a sort of guardian spirit of the family. It shows itself to Griselda as alive, and it is its magic power that gives Griselda admittance to the strange worlds. In Edith Nesbit´s "Five Children - and It" (1902) some children find a "sandfairy", the "Psammead", an animal living in the sand. It is a survival from bygone days and has the mission to grant requests. So, the children may wish for all that they desire: gold coins, to be able to fly, etc. all but for one day. The "Psammead" is also found in "The Story of the Amulet" (1906); it appears in "The Phoenix and the Carpet" (1904), where, however, its rôle for the most part is taken over by Phoenix. In Nesbit´s "The House of Arden" (1908) the helper is a white mole (named Mouldiwarp). It is related to the cuckoo of Molesworth, since it is the protector of the family Arden (it is the mole on the family crest personified).

It is said about the cuckoo of Molesworth that it was good-humoured and wonderful, but that it was somewhat difficult to keep it company. He wanted to be respected and had his own outlook on things. These qualities are common to the cuckoo and to the animal figures of Nesbit. Other animal figures that do not have these qualities belong, however, to the supernatural helpers as well, as for instance the speaking dolphin

in Katherine Allfrey´s "Delphinensommer" (1963), which brings Andrula to the mythical land Hyria.

The mythical worlds

A mythical, fully structured world outside the real is already found in Hoffmann´s "Nussknacker und Mausekönig". The nut-cracker and Marie enter the "doll-land", a country of sweets, through a "door" (see below). Strange worlds are also described in Molesworth´s "The Cuckoo Clock".

The best modern examples of mythical worlds outside space and (or) time is surely Narnia and the other strange worlds in Lewis´s Narnian books (1950-56). Other such mythical worlds are The Country Far Away and The Country Outside in Lindgren´s "Mio, min Mio" (Mio, my Mio, 1954), as well as the island Hyria in Allfrey´s "Delphinensommer". In spite of the nonsense traits the island Neverland in Barrie´s "Peter Pan and Wendy" must surely be counted among these mythical worlds. There are also fully structured worlds not outside space and (or) time but only side by side with the world of man. We then find people of a different type as is imagined in popular belief. Otfried Preussler´s beings who lead a nearly human life in a house on the bottom of the mill-pond resemble the figures of popular belief ("Der kleine Wassermann", 1956). The narrative may, however, be characterized as fantastic, since the little water-man establishes contact with human society (he comes across some boys on the shore).

The little water-man is the same size as human beings but sometimes worlds of minature people are described. One may here speak of a "Lilliput-motif"; yet little men are well-known in popular belief, too. The first story in Lindgren´s "Nils Karlsson-Pyssling" (1949) tells of a boy who gets a tiny creature as playmate. He lives in the house behind a mouse-hole. With the help of magic the boy is made just as small and he helps the creature with the furnishing. (That children grow smaller in order to get into the mythical world is a motif that has already appeared in "Nussknacker und Mausekönig" and in "The Cuckoo Clock".) Furniture is fetched away from the doll´s house, the floor is swept with a toothbrush, and the room is heated with used matches. Another story in this book tells about a family of miniature people living in a cave in the earth in the park. The children, however, go to an ordinary school. The furnished apartments in these two stories are very much like the

apartment of the borrowers in Mary Norton´s "The Borrowers" (1952, with three sequels 1955-61). The world of the borrowers that is also seen by human beings, is a well worked-out world of miniature people.

The combat between good and evil

In several fantastic tales a combat is fought between representatives of the good and evil powers. This motif is already found in Hoffmann, especially in "Das fremde Kind", where the pheasant prince as well as the father of the children fight the gnome Pepser (the father fights Pepser in his disguise as a tutor).

This combat is further the principal motif in Lewis´s books about Narnia, where the representatives of the two world-powers are the lion Aslan and the witch Jadis. In Lindgren´s 'Mio, min Mio" Mio fights the knight Kato who has a heart of stone. In Maria Gripe´s "Glasblåsarns barn" (The Children of the Glass-Blower, 1964) the two sisters fight each other with magic means. This combat is, however, not definitively settled, as the combat between the powers of good and evil goes on for ever.

Journeys through space and time

Journeys through space and time may go to mythical worlds; they may, however, only transfer the heroes into remote but real worlds. Space displac ements take place through old magic means, well-known in the chimerical tale, i.e. variants of the flying carpet. In Nesbit´s "The Phoenix and the Carpet" it is precisely a flying carpet, in Hilda Lewis´s "The Ship That Flew" (1939) it is wooden ship of the Vikings, in Norton´s "Bed-Knob and Broomstick", it is an ordinary bedstead.

Still more miraculous are the journeys through time that are brought about with the same means. In Nesbit´s "The Story of the Amulet" the children come to ancient Babylon, and the Babylonian queen is transferred to the present time. In the same way Miss Price and the children in "Bed-Knob and Broomstick" travel not only to the Southern Ocean but also to England of the 17th century, and a person from this century is taken along on the way back.

A typical trait of the motif of time displacement is that time only flows in the world to which one is transferred. In Nesbit´s "The House

of Arden" the brother is sitting on the second-hand of a flower-clock, while his sister is in the past. When she is with him again, no time has passed away for him. When the children in Lewis´s "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" (1950) return from all their adventures in Narnia, the time is the same as that at which they left England.

The door

The "door" is a concrete expression of the connection between the two worlds, it is the way to the world of wonders and the way back to the real world.

The motif is already to be found in Hoffmann, viz. in "Nussknacker und Mausekönig". Through the big wardrobe, where her father´s fur coat is hanging, Marie gets into the Country of Sweets. In Molesworth´s "The Cuckoo Clock" Griselda goes through a Chinese cupboard into the Country of the Mandarins. She also goes through a mysterious door in the house out into a garden. The children in Nesbit´s "The House of Arden" get an opportunity to follow the fates of their ancestors. The way is a door in the upper storey, which they sometimes can see and walk through. The door is thus a door in the house, although it also (because it is magic) is a door in addition to the ones that are in the house. In Pearce´s "Tom´s Midnight Garden" (1958) the door that leads into the garden of bygone days is an ordinary house door. In the first book about Narnia, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe", the door is once more a wardrobe. During their play the children hide in the wardrobe and get into Narnia. Exactly as in "Nussknacker und Mausekönig" there are fur coats. But suddenly there are no soft fur coats any more but prickly twigs. During the first moments in Narnia the children are able to see the fur coats in the wardrobe behind them. Lewis has several variants of the door motif. In "Prince Caspian: the Return to Narnia" (1951) it is related that previously there were many gorges between the two worlds. One of these ways, which opens out into a cave on an island in the Southern Ocean, is definitively closed at the end of the book. When the children, together with the people that had lived in Narnia, are going to leave this land, Aslan builds a gate of poles. At the very instant that the children go through the gate they see an open field in Narnia, the gleaming cave in the Southern Ocean and the sandy railway-station platform whence they had come and to which they now return. The door in "The Silver Chair" (1953) is a gate in the stone wall which demarcates

the school grounds from the moorland. In "The Magician´s Nephew", wells in a forest are doors to different worlds. A picture of a ship opens up in "The Voyage of the ´Dawn Treader´" (1952), so that the children end up right out at sea in Narnia.

It is to be observed that the door motif is to be found in nonsense literature, too. The way to the Southern Ocean in Kästner´s "Der 35. Mai" goes through the wardrobe of the uncle, exactly as in "Nussknacker und Mausekönig" and "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". Travers´s Mary Poppins enters a picture in order to drink afternoon tea. When the children who are in her charge sit in the park reading a book, the princes and the unicorn painted in the book come out into the park. Mary Poppins disappears through the nursery door as it is seen in the mirror, yet at the same time without being in the real door. The background may be Dodgson´s "Through the Looking Glass" where Alice enters the room that is seen in the mirror and from there the world outside that room. In these instances, however, the worlds arrived at are not the strange worlds of the fantastic tale, but examples of the "mundus inversus" of the nonsense literature, the world turned upside-down. The mirror in "Through the Looking Glass" is here particularly applicable. To be able to read in the mirror-world Alice holds a book before another mirror. When she wants to move onwards she must go backwards. The unicorn is surprised, since he always had believed that children were only fabled beasts In exactly the same way the princes in Travers´s book believe that Jane and Michael are fairy-tale children.

In itself the door motif is thus no guarantee for a fantastic tale (in the same way the motif of the flying carpet may be found in a chimerical as well as in a fantastic tale).

CONSEQUENCES OF GENRE RESEARCH FOR LITERARY CRITICISM OF THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

The criticism of literature proceeds from different viewpoints and will always be somewhat subjective. It would, however, be valuable to have objective measures. Genre research may be able to make a contribution.

1. In the fantastic tale we find the motifs mentioned above. When a new work is published using one or more of these motifs, the critic has to judge how independently or unoriginally the motifs are treated. A more original treatment must be more highly prized. For such a judgement, knowledge about the motifs and their former treatment in the genre is of importance.

2. Homogeneity is of importance for a work of art. Thus there may be a problem if different motifs that do not fit so well with one another, appear in the same work. When research on literature for children has drawn the boundaries between different genres, it would be easier to judge to what extent motifs may be brought together. In the case of the fantastic tale the question above all is if motifs of nonsense literature accord with the motifs of the fantastic tale. It has already been pointed out that there are certain nonsense traits in the first book about Narnia, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". As it is Lewis´s first children´s book it may be that he had not fully grasped his form. Perhaps one might suggest that this book would be a better work of art if these nonsense traits were removed.

Erica Lillegg has used motifs in "Vevi" (1955) that make her book a fantastic tale. The rat-mother that gives Vevi the root-girl may be seen as a relative of the supernatural animal figures in Nesbit. At any rate the motif of the root-girl is fetched from popular belief in witches and connected with the motif of the Doppelgänger. Since Vevi still lives in a realistic environment, we are in the sphere of the fantastic tale. In this context the story of Dick Bertha, who at the same time is a cook and a gun, has been inserted, and further there is a narrative of a journey to Paris on a cannon-ball which makes a détour to its home and itself takes off anew. These parts belong to nonsense literature. There are several other such nonsense traits in "Vevi" (the living picture at

the burgomaster´s, the policeman who wants to buy an aunt, the lady-bird that takes off its dots in the evening, the police description of the root-girl, etc.). To the literary critic the question must be important if this combination of elements of the fantastic tale and of nonsense literature has brought about an artistic unity or if this unity is destroyed since the motifs do not accord with one another.

The boundary lines between the fantastic tale and the story of ordinary children may also be indistinct. In Ronald Welch´s "The Gauntlet" (1951) a boy is transferred to the 14th century. In this story we thus find the journey through time. At the end, when the boy has returned home, there is a discussion whether the journey was a real one or if it was only a dream. The "proof" is a dagger which the boy has buried in the past. The dagger has, however, become very rusty and so it may be another dagger. A peculiar circumstance is also that two persons of the 14th century are very much like two persons of the present day, what may be taken as evidence of a dream.

This latter motif has been used by Astrid Lindgren, too, in "Mio, min Mio". People in The Country Far Away resemble people in Stockholm. The king has the face of the father of the boy´s best friend. Jum-Jum and this friend are alike. The mother of Jum-Jum looks like Aunt Lundin, and the horse Miramis has the same eyes as the old brewer´s horse. Lindgren has presumably meant that all the adventures are the fantasies of a boy in despair. On the other hand, the book in formal respects is a completely fantastic tale with mythical worlds and a combat between good and evil powers, and has for that reason been treated above as a fantastic tale.

Now it may be said that the great artist is able to accomplish all. A critic has, however, the task of deciding to what genre these books belong and to examine the artistic consequences. Perhaps he could be of the opinion that "The Gauntlet", in the main a historical novel, is not damaged through the proof discussion, but instead is more interesting as a result of this discussion. Perhaps, on the other hand, he could think that "Mio, min Mio" should be either a pure fantastic tale or a book about the mind of a lonely boy (and in this case with fantasies of a simpler kind, since a nine-year-old boy is hardly able to imagine such a course of events).

THE EDUCATIONAL INTENTION OF THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

Up to now we have dealt with the fantastic tale only as a literary category. It is, however, also possible and indeed necessary to study the educational problems of a genre of children´s literature. Sometimes, the educational aim even belongs to the definition of a genre. Thus the moral chimerical tale is of another genre than the chimerical tale without didactic intent. (This is demonstrated by special motifs that appear in the moral chimerical tale but not in other chimerical tales, viz. the motif of bodily changes as a consequence of changes in moral qualities.) The fantastic tale is only one genre from the literary wiewpoint, but it may embrace different educational purposes.

1. E.T.A. Hoffmann was a Romanticist, and his "Das fremde Kind" looks like a romantic pamphlet in education. The cousins, educated according to the tenets of the Enlightenment, are scoffed at, and the tutor himself is a demon. The child´s ideal life is the life of the imagination together with the strange child. We thus come across the educational ideals of Romanticism. The goal was not to impart knowledge and moral principles but, through stimulating feeling and imagination, to liberate the "nightly powers" in the child (this could also create morality). The concept of "nightly powers" we can better understand if we use the modern term "unconscious powers" (i.e. in the meaning of Jung and Read). The outcome of this liberating of "nightly powers" is the harmonious individual.

This intention of stimulating feeling and imagination is encountered in modern fantastic tales, too. A likeness between "Das fremde Kind" and Masefield´s "The Midnight Folk", where the leader of the witches is masked as a governess, has already been pointed out. The evil power in Gripe´s "Glasblåsarns barn" is the nurse, also an educator. This linking of evil and education may imply a kinship with the Romanticists of the early 19th century. The boy Eustace in Lewis´s "The Voyage of the ´Dawn Treader´" puts one in mind of the cousins in "Das fremde Kind". He had only read books about exports and imports, governments and municipal drains but no books about dragons. Obviously the books about dragons are thought to provide better oppor-

tunities for stimulating feeling and imagination.

In Hoffmann´s "Das fremde Kind" the father on his deathbed recollects that he, too, in his childhood had known the strange child and played with him. The yearning for childhood which speaks here is a reflection of the romantic view of the child´s world of free imagination as a world of higher value than the adult world. Thus, we may discover romantic lines of thought when forgotten strange children are mentioned. In "Peter Pan and Wendy" it is said that we (the adults) have also been on the island Neverland, although we will never again land there. A vestige of this motif is also found in Farmer´s "The Summer Birds". The schoolmistress is so very fond of the strange boy that her pupils ask themselves if she had perhaps known someone who was like him when she was a child.

2. Although the first fantastic tales for children were created by romantic lines of thought, we can also find the tradition of the Enlightenment in fantastic tales. The educationalists of the Age of Reason wanted to impart knowledge and character, and we may here speak of the didactic intention.

Molesworth´s aim is the older, more open one, of giving moral lessons: the cuckoo (in "The Cuckoo Clock") teaches Griselda to be kind, obedient and diligent. In Nesbit there are glimpses of a political nature (Nesbit belonged to the Fabian Society). "The Story of the Amulet" pictures the poverty and misery of London of that day. When, for instance, the Babylonian queen, transferred to our times, sees how Londoners live, she asks why the owners of the slaves do not see to it that they get better clothes and more food. In "The House of Arden" it is said that the human beings of our day are more cruel than in the days when people for no reason had their heads chopped off. The people have to work 14 hours a day for 9 shillings a week, and when they steal something to keep themselves alive, they are put in prison. Lewis seems to be giving his views on state administration when he (in "The Silver Chair") tells of a headmistress, who is helped into Parliament when she proves a complete failure in different educational professions. In this book there is also an attack of a political nature on schools that are "free" and regard their pupils as psychological cases.

The journeys in time give rise to philosophical discussions about the concept of time. The cuckoo in Molesworth´s "The Cuckoo Clock" makes comments of this kind. Whether time seems long or short is a

matter of perception. (If all that has happened from Creation to the present were to repeat itself in five minutes, it would go unnoticed.) Pearce´s "Tom´s Midnight Garden" is a discussion on the enigma of time.

The mythological combat between good and evil is a theme that belongs to the religious world of ideas even if the two powers are not called God and the Devil. In Lewis´s Narnian books many theological concepts are encountered. The problem of faith and knowledge is treated in "Prince Caspian". The lion Aslan reveals himself to Lucy. The other children are not able to see him and do not intend to follow him. Susan has believed in his presence, however, at any rate she could have believed if she had wanted to. Creation and temptation are encountered in "The Magician´s Nephew", where there are passages that are allied to the scriptural narratives of the creation of the world and of the garden of Eden. "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" tells of substitutional suffering (Aslan lets himself be killed in order to save Edmund), and about resurrection (Aslan is raised from the dead). Lewis himself has said that the Narnian books "are not so much allegory as supposal" and that he was disappointed that so many adults thought that he had written these books in order to form his Christian apology for the use of children. James E. Higgins, who has reported this statement, says, however, that the reader must compare his own world with Narnia and that redemption is the theme of the Narnian books (Higgins 1966). Roger Lancelyn Green in his book about Lewis (1963, 49) speaks about "the underlying allegory". What is more, Aslan brings it out clearly ("The Voyage of the ´Dawn Treader´") that the children were brought to Narnia to meet him and be able afterwards to recognize him (that is Christ) in their own world. Thus we cannot get away from the fact that the Narnian books aim at introducing religious thought.

3. In modern literary reviews of children´s books there is often mention of books solely for pleasure as opposed to books with educational aims. This is too unsophisticated. If one wishes only to entertain one surely has an educational aim. It can be that one wishes to satisfy one of the needs of children, the need for pleasure. If it can be said that the didactic intention and the intention of stimulating feeling and imagination take into consideration the fact that the child will grow up and wish to bring about certain qualities in men and women, one could perhaps speak of a third educational intention that holds that the main

objective of education is to satisfy the needs of children. This intention of satisfying needs presents itself in such fantastic tales as Norton´s "Bed-Knob and Broomstick" and Clarke´s "The Twelve and the Genii" that intend merely to entertain apparently. Books that tell of lonely children want to satisfy the need for security in the readers. A wish to satisfy the needs of children may also be present in such authors who agree with the child-psychological hypothesis that children at a certain age need a literature that mixes elements of magic and reality (see the following chapter).

The problem is, however, if the intention of satisfying needs really is independent. The wish to satisfy the needs of children may imply an estimation of the child that can be interpreted as a romantic line of thought (children are closer to the "night" than adults, live in the "twilight"). The intention of satisfying needs could also belong to the intention of stimulating feeling and imagination in that one could think that a child that experiences pleasure and security has an opportunity to set free the intrinsic powers that can make the adult harmonious. (One could even contend that the child needs knowledge and moral principles which would bring didactic intention into the picture.)

The study of fantastic tales intended, apparently, only to entertain and the study of other children´s books with the same aim may contribute to the analysis of educational ideals.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF THE FANTASTIC TALE FOR CHILDREN

The child-psychological hypothesis on the fantastic tale

Koch (1959, 58-59, 62, cf. 56) proposes a child-psychological hypothesis concerning the fantastic tale. "In the child´s development there must obviously be a time when real and unreal exist side by side... That happens from the 7th year when the child frees itself from magic and begins to turn towards reality ... The authors of fantastic tales do justice to this dualism in the child." Koch seems to regard the years from 8 to 11 as the stage in question.

Krüger (1960, 344) has a similar exposition and about the same age-limits. "The reading age for the fantastic book begins with the end of the ´Märchen´-age (7 to 9 years) and extends to the end of the ´Vorreifezeit´ (12 to 13 years). That wonder and reality are side by side in these books meets the mental level of the children who grow too old for the ´Märchen´. With alternating consciousness they for a long time swing to and fro between a magic and a realistic conception of the world."

This hypothesis resembles the argument for the chimerical tale as suited to younger children who are thought to be in an altogether magic stage of development (according to Krüger the 7-9-years old are at "the end of the ´Märchen´-age").

In judging these hypotheses one must, however, observe that they are based on the description of the growth of the conception of reality provided by the German developmental psychology. It is characteristic that Koch as well as Krüger rely upon a well-known work of this child-psychological school: Wilhelm Hansen´s "Die Entwicklung des kindlichen Weltbildes".

The child-psychological school that is called here "the German developmental psychology" (with representatives such as William Stern, Felix Krueger, Heinz Werner, Charlotte Bühler and Hildegard Hetzer) belongs to the psychological schools that accentuate hereditary factors (maturing as opposed to learning) and further regard development as passing through distinct phases. There are, however, other child-psychological schools. The exact opposite of the German developmental

psychology is the more modern American psychology of childhood and adolescence (Harry L. and Leta S. Hollingworth, etc.) which stresses learning and regards development as continuous.

When one considers magic thought from this viewpoint, one has to notice that for the schools that emphasize maturing and discontinuity, magic is something that belongs to the so-called primitive mental structure, i.e. something that has come from inside the child and has not been learned, something that is succeeded by a new non-magic mental structure. From the opposite point of view magic is something learned that may exist at all times of life. Magic thought may then be of the same kind as scientific thought, though abandoned when the modern view of life appeared. That magic thought appears to-day (among children as well as among adults) may thus be caused by the passing on of magic tradition in the same way that, for instance, religious tradition is passed on.

The German developmental psychology has presented the well-known theory of the stages of reading interest. This theory is a good example of the lines of thought of this child-psychological school, since the stages are understood as dependent on the maturing process and regarded as clearly separate from each other. But even in Germany the influence of this theory is diminishing (cf. Beinlich 1968). Thus the child-psychological hypothesis concerning the fantastic tale, given by Koch and Krüger, cannot quite simply be accepted. There is the possibility that a certain fantastic tale is not suitable for the 8-12 years old. It is conceivable, too, that fantastic tales may be read in other age groups since we know there are fantastic tales for adult readers.

Children's interest in the magic apparatus of the fantastic tale and their capacity for understanding it

If one cannot take it for granted that the magic apparatus of the fantastic tale corresponds to a certain mental structure that is dependent on age, the question arises if children really appreciate this apparatus or even understand it. On the other hand they may have interest in and understanding of this magic apparatus, even if magic thought and customs are to be regarded as emanating from tradition.

It is true that the diminishing importance of magic tradition among adults may result in less knowledge in the children about magic thought

and practice. And yet against this it may be held that the age groups have their own traditions "inherited" from generation to generation. In the lore of children magic thought and practice are preserved. Perhaps children for that reason still know so much about magic that they understand and appreciate fantastic tales. It is also possible that the situation in this respect is changing rapidly. We thus need inquiries using child-psychological methods into the extent to which children know about and are interested in witches, talismans etc.

Two facts may be pointed out in this connection. One is that the fantastic tale itself keeps tradition alive. One can simply say that the more fantastic tales the children read the better they understand other such books. The other fact is that magic tradition is perhaps better maintained in certain countries. It thus seems that the witch tradition is very alive in Great Britain, where so many fantastic tales originate. This is of interest as regards translations. Books which in a certain country are of interest to the children there may perhaps not succeed as well in some other country.

Children´s capacity for understanding the various ideas, philosophical, theological, etc. in the fantastic tale

As has been pointed out there is a tendency to inplant ideas, philosophical, theological, and so on, through the fantastic tale. The problem is whether children can make use of these passages.

The yearning for childhood, which is a romantic trait, may hardly have any greater interest to children. Dyhrenfurth´s (1967, 99) objection in her treatment of the "Märchen" of the romantic poets may apply to our problem as well: "Yearning for childhood is far from the thoughts of the child. It lives in the happiness of its childhood and does not yet know about looking back."

As to the journeys in time and the discussions about the concept of time it may be pointed out that the difficulties in childhood of grasping the meaning of historical time is a problem for the teachers of history.

Koch (1959, 60-62) touches on the discussions of the possibility of other worlds and says that one cannot bring home the limitation of the intellect to an age in which the reader rejoices in his awakening intellectual powers.

Concerning the theological concepts in Lewis it must be acknowledged that it could be a very good idea to give the young readers an account of the religious thought of adults, though in a form that is more intelligible to them. One has, however, to stress the difficulty children have in comprehending Bible stories on an abstract religious level. The investigations of Ronald Goldman (1964) into this problem may serve as a parallel in existing educational research.

Perhaps the questions are put too negatively. They show, however, that research work is needed with regard to the child's understanding of the fantastic tale. A model may be borrowed from Goldman. Bible stories can be grasped on different levels. The narrative of the crossing of the Red Sea may be appreciated by younger children as an adventure story; comprehension of the religious content does not reveal itself before the age of 13 or in fact later. In the same way children may understand the Narnian books on the level of a story about children or of an adventure story before they grasp them on the abstract religious level.

Perhaps someone will now say that it is a good thing that it is possible to grasp a book on different levels. Then the child can read the book in one way and the adult in another. If a book wants to be children's literature and is published for children, it is, however, to be supposed that the author is hoping that his young readers will understand it.

The level model gives us, moreover, the general intimation that it is too simple to establish that children like a certain book or a certain genre. We must know, <u>what</u> they like in the book or the genre and what they do <u>not</u> like, <u>what</u> they understand and what they do <u>not</u> understand.

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There are two criterions of a good children's book. On the one hand we must demand the same of literature for children as of literature for adults: artistic unity, independent treatment of the motifs, etc. That a book is of interest to children and is adapted to their understanding will not quite simply make it a good children's book. (A reviewer who rests content with the remark that children will surely be interested in the book has not performed his duties. One cannot review a book for adults in this way and the same applies to a book for children.) On the

other hand, there are demands on a children's book that a book for adults does not present. A good children's book must be adapted to children. It must rouse their interest and, not least, be understood by them. (Yet it must be added: it is not necessary that it interests all children or is understood by all. Like adults, children are different individuals.) And so a book may be a work of art but not a good children's book. Thus the viewpoint of educational psychology is important for research on literature for children and for the criticism of that literature.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF FANTASTIC TALES DISCUSSED IN THIS TREATISE

1816 E.T.A. Hoffmann, Nussknacker und Mausekönig
1817 E.T.A. Hoffmann, Das fremde Kind
1835 H.C. Andersen, Den lille Idas Blomster
1877 M.L. Molesworth, The Cuckoo Clock
1902 E. Nesbit, Five Children - and It
1904 E. Nesbit, The Phoenix and the Carpet
1906 E. Nesbit, The Story of the Amulet
1908 E. Nesbit, The House of Arden
1911 J.M. Barrie, Peter Pan and Wendy
1927 J. Masefield, The Midnight Folk
1930 A. Parrish, Floating Island
1939 H. Lewis, The Ship That Flew
1945 A. Lindgren, Pippi Långstrump
1945-47, 1957 M. Norton, Bed-Knob and Broomstick
1949 A. Lindgren, Nils Karlsson-Pyssling
1950 C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
1951 C.S. Lewis, Prince Caspian: the Return to Narnia
1951 R. Welch, The Gauntlet
1952 C.S. Lewis, The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"
1952 M. Norton, The Borrowers (sequels 1955-61)
1953 C.S. Lewis, The Silver Chair
1954 A. Lindgren, Mio, min Mio
1955 C.S. Lewis, The Magician's Nephew
1955 E. Lillegg, Vevi
1955 B. Sleigh, Carbonel
1956 O. Preussler, Der kleine Wassermann
1958 A. Ph. Pearce, Tom's Midnight Garden
1962 P. Clarke, The Twelve and the Genii
1962 P. Farmer, The Summer Birds
1963 K. Allfrey, Delphinensommer
1964 M. Gripe, Glasblåsarns barn
1966 K. Allfrey, Dimitri

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